



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 21st INFANTRY DIVISION, 21st FA BATTAL, FORT RILEY
FORT RILEY, KANSAS 66442-0022

REF ID:
ATTENTION OF

AFZN-ES-S

14 December 2004


MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Hearing Conservation Program

1. In accordance with DA PAM 40-501, Hearing Conservation and DODI 6055.12, Department of Defense Hearing Conservation Program, participation in the hearing conservation program is mandatory for activities exposing military or civilian personnel to hazardous noise levels. Participation in the program is a regulatory requirement, however more important is the protection of hearing in individuals who must operate under hazardous noise conditions. The sense of hearing cannot withstand exposure to hazardous noise levels for extended time periods. Maintaining good hearing is a prerequisite for a healthy fighting force and a healthy work force.
2. Noise-induced hearing loss is a major occupational health hazard facing military and civilian personnel at Fort Riley. Most hearing loss due to noise exposure occurs during training or from exposure to equipment generating damaging levels of noise. Health education briefings are available to teach individuals about noise hazards and how to prevent hearing loss. The annually required hearing check ensures personnel are not losing hearing in disproportionate amounts when compared to non noise-exposed individuals.
3. To schedule the required annual hearing test and/or the annual health education briefing contact the Hearing Conservation/Audiology Clinic at 239-7875. To schedule hearing tests for civilian personnel, contact the Occupational Health Clinic at 239-7042.
4. POC is LTC Smetana, Hearing Conservation Program Manager, at 239-7875.

3 Encls

1. Hearing Conservation MOI
2. Sample SOP
3. Hearing Conservation Program Elements


DENNIS E. HARDY
Major General, US Army
Commanding

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REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
USA MEDICAL DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY
600 CARSON HILL ROAD
FORT RILEY, KANSAS 66442-5037

MEMORANDUM OF INSTRUCTION T-12-14-04

MCXX-BENT

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Hearing Conservation Training / Use of Hearing Test Facilities

1. References:

- a. AR 40-5, Preventive Medicine, 15 October 1990.
- b. DODI 6055.12, Department of Defense Hearing Conservation Program, April 1996.
- c. DA PAM 40-501, December 10, 1998, Hearing Conservation.

2. Military and civilian organizations whose personnel are exposed to hazardous noise levels must participate in the hearing conservation program IAW the above references. Units may arrange for annual hearing tests and health education briefings by contracting the Hearing Conservation/Audiology Clinic at Irwin Army Community Hospital (IACH).

3. Commanders are responsible for ensuring their Soldiers are monitored for hearing loss and receive an annual hearing conservation health education briefing. The following instructions outline battalion- and/or company-level responsibilities for meeting annual hearing conservation training requirements.

4. Requirements:

a. Commanders:

(1) Appoint a unit hearing conservation officer or non-commissioned officer (HCO) and ensure personnel performing unit hearing testing are Occupational Hearing Conservationist (OHC) certified by the Council For Accreditation In Occupational Hearing Conservation (CAOHC).

(2) Ensure unit has an SOP detailing the unit hearing conservation program.

(3) Ensure annually required hearing conservation training is a part of the training schedule.

(4) Ensure unit personnel receive annual hearing testing, annual health education briefings, and are issued hearing protection.

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SUBJECT: Hearing Conservation Training / Use of Hearing Test Facilities

(5) Ensure all personnel return for required follow-up testing.

(6) Ensure noise exposed personnel wear, when appropriate, hearing protective devices and wear them correctly. Noise exposed personnel are required to wear the earplug carrying case with earplugs as part of the battle dress uniform when appropriate.

(7) Ensure noise hazardous areas and equipment are marked with proper danger signs and decals.

(8) Notify industrial hygiene of any suspected hazardous-noise levels or changes in hazardous noise levels in their work areas.

(9) Ensure compliance with DA PAM 40-501 Hearing Conservation.

b. S1:

(1) Coordinate release of medical records with Troop Medical Clinic/Battalion Aid Station NLT 1 week prior to scheduled test date.

(2) Ensure at least one company per day for BN sized elements will be available for testing each day of the annual unit testing.

c. S3:

(1) Ensure organic personnel selected to perform hearing tests for the unit are CAOHC certified or will attend the certification course prior to performing unit testing. Ensure certified personnel attend the re-certification course every three years. Contact the Audiology Clinic at IACH to obtain current information on CAOHC certification courses and their availability.

(2) Coordinate medical support testing through appropriate channels if CAOHC personnel are not organic to unit. PERSONNEL TASKED MUST BE CAOHC CERTIFIED.

(3) Ensure all testing personnel report to IACH HENT clinic NLT 1 week prior to scheduled testing to receive DOEHS-HC computer refresher training. Personnel not reporting for refresher training will not receive access to DOEHS-HC equipment.

(4) Include annual hearing conservation training on unit master training schedule.

(5) Coordinate health education briefing with the OHC and ensure unit participation in the health education briefings is documented.

(6) Coordinate make up test date for any Soldiers deployed, TDY, in school or on leave. A compliance of 90% is commendable. Less than 80% is unacceptable.

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(7) Prepare a unit SOP for hearing conservation addressing unit order of operation for completing the annually required hearing testing and health education. A sample SOP is provided as enclosure for unit SOP development.

(8) The length of time that Hearing Test Facilities can be assigned to a unit will be dependent upon the number of personnel in the unit. Approximately 100 personnel can be tested per day. Units are encouraged to use scheduled test time efficiently.

d. S4:

(1) Coordinate use of Hearing Test Facilities with the unit Occupational Hearing Conservationist (OHC) and Hearing Conservation/Audiology Clinic at IACH.

(2) Ensure adequate supply of all 8 earplug sizes are available for issue during testing. Stock numbers are available if needed.

e. Hearing Conservation Officer or Non-Commissioned Officer (HCO)

(1) Coordinate unit annual hearing testing and health education briefing with the S1-S4 staff and the hearing conservation clinic. POC for scheduling annual hearing evaluations, use of Hearing Test Facilities, or to obtain outside testing personnel is the NCOIC of the Audiology Clinic at 239-7875.

(2) Report to the Audiology/Hearing Conservation Clinic NLT one week prior to scheduled unit test date for refresher training. All certified OHCs will be required to attend a one week refresher course before being allowed to test independently in the Hearing Test Facility.

(3) Coordinate review of unit medical records for hearing baseline records (DA 2215) and most recent hearing evaluations. Determine which Soldiers are in need of annual audiograms. Provide alpha roster of Soldiers with unit LJC to the testing personnel.

(4) Coordinate with unit staff to ensure Soldiers needing follow-up test receive follow-up testing.

5. Soldiers showing a significant threshold shift (STS) in hearing acuity require follow-up tests are to return to the Hearing Test Facility for follow-up number one. Those Soldiers needing follow-up number two should be referred to the Audiology Clinic for a hearing evaluation. Unit HCOs will return copies of test results to the Audiology Clinic upon completion of unit testing for review. As a result of the review, additional Soldiers may require follow-up testing. All appointment dates are coordinated through the unit to ensure availability of Soldiers and to avoid training conflicts. SOLDIERS MUST REPORT for all follow-up appointments.

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6. The proponent for this program is LTC Smetana, Hearing Conservation Program Manager. POC for this memorandum is SSG Manning, NCOIC of EENT, at 239-7875.

2 Encls

1. Sample Unit SOP for HCP
2. HCP Component Outline



MARILYN H. BROOKS

COL, AN

Commanding

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SAMPLE UNIT SOP

ACTIVITY SYMBOL (Unit MARK symbol)

DATE

MEMORANDUM FOR (Unit)

SUBJECT: Hearing Conservation SOP for (Unit Name)

1. REFERENCES

- a. AR 40-5, Preventive Medicine, 15 October 1990.
- b. DODI 6055.12, Department of Defense Hearing Conservation Program, April 1996.
- c. DA PAM 40-501, December 10, 1998, Hearing Conservation.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES (eliminate and or add responsibilities as needed).

a. Unit Commander/Supervisor:

(1) List responsibilities

(2)

(3)

b. Hearing Conservation officer:

(1) List responsibilities

(2)

(3)

c. Unit Occupational Hearing Conservationist (personnel responsible for performing unit testing, fitting of hearing protection, training and education):

(1) List responsibilities

(2)

(3)

ENCL 2

OFFICE SYMBOL

SUBJECT: Hearing Conservation SOP for (Unit Name)

d. S-1 through S-4 staff:

(1) List responsibilities

(2)

(3)

3. PROCEDURES

a. Outline how testing is to be completed within the unit

b.

c.

HEARING CONSERVATION PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The essential elements of a hearing conservation program include:

- (1) **Noise Hazard Identification** (Chapter 4 DA PAM 40-501). A noise survey of all suspected noise-hazardous areas and equipment will be conducted at least once but also within thirty days of any change in operations i.e., addition or deletion of noise hazardous equipment or rearrangement of existing equipment.
- (2) **Engineering Controls** (Chapter 5 DA PAM 40-501). Whenever feasible, engineering controls such as reducing, isolating or eliminating noise hazards will be used to reduce steady-state noise levels to below 85dB(A) and impulse noise levels to below 140dB. Procurement of new equipment or facilities will include safe noise limits when feasible to ensure new equipment and facilities are not noise hazardous.
- (3) **Hearing Protectors** (Chapter 6 DA PAM 40-501). Hearing protectors consists of earplugs, noise muffs, ear canal caps, noise-attenuating helmets or a combination of these. All personnel working in noise hazardous areas or with noise hazardous equipment must have hearing protectors with them at all times. Use of hearing protectors is required in training and noncombat scenarios. All sizes and types of earplugs are to be maintained by the medical treatment facilities for issue to unit personnel. Only medically trained personnel will fit the performed earplugs.
- (4) **Monitoring Audiometry** (Chapter 7 DA PAM 40-501). All military and civilian personnel in the hearing conservation program (HCP) will receive annual audiograms. Individuals identified as having a significant threshold shift (STS) must return for follow-up testing as directed. An audiologist, physician, or an audiometric technician who is certified by the Council for Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation or who has completed equivalent military training must conduct testing.
- (5) **Health Education** (Chapter 8 DA PAM 40-501). Personnel in the HCP are to receive annual health education training about noise hazards, the effects of noise hazards on hearing, and types of hearing protectors available and their advantages and disadvantages.
- (6) **Enforcement** (Chapter 9 DA PAM 40-501). The hearing conservation program is a matter of command emphasis. The unit commander or supervisor endorses the installation commander's command emphasis letter explaining the importance of the hearing conservation program, enforces the use of hearing protectors during noise hazardous actions and in noise hazardous areas, and ensures personnel receive annual testing.
- (7) **Program Evaluation** (Chapter 10 DA PAM 40-501). The installation hearing conservation manager reports through the installation medical authority hearing conservation participation, quality assurance and program effectiveness. Units are required to have at least 80% program participation in the annual monitoring audiometry program.